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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 27th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 6 October 1992, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. GANEV (Bulgaria)

later: Mr. MONGBE (Benin)
(Vice-President)

- Address by Sir Ketumile Masire, President of the Republic of Botswana

- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by

Sir Baddeley Devesi (Solomon Islands)
Mr. Kalpagé (Sri Lanka)
Mr. King (Barbados)
Mr. Turnquest (Bahamas)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

ADDRESS BY SIR KETUMILE MASIRE, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Republic of Botswana.

Sir Ketumile Masire, President of the Republic of Botswana, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Botswana, His Excellency Sir Ketumile Masire, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President MASIRE: I am pleased to extend to you, Sir, and to your country, Bulgaria, the sincere congratulations of my delegation on your election to the presidency of the forty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly. I have no doubt that under your able leadership this session will be a great success.

(President Masire)

In the short space of time since he assumed office at the beginning of the year, our new Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, has more than justified the confidence reposed in him and his prodigious qualities and abilities by his election to the highly demanding office of Secretary-General. He has been, during these nine turbulent months, more than a match for the daunting crises that have so far characterized the so-called new world order. We salute him and his equally dedicated colleagues in the Secretariat.

The forty-seventh session of the General Assembly is being held at a rare moment in history. It is a moment so brilliantly captured in the language of Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, wherein are written these words:

> "The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage ...".
>
> (resolution 217 A (III), article 21, para. 3)

Peoples across the globe are marching triumphantly to seize control of their own destinies through the ballot. This has been clearly manifested in the admission of seven new Members during the forty-sixth regular session of the General Assembly and many more at its resumed meetings. The membership of those new States enhances the universality of the United Nations. We warmly welcome their presence in our midst.

The end of the cold war has triggered an avalanche of demands on the United Nations at a time when the Organization is tottering on the verge of bankruptcy. The Organization is being called upon to be everywhere where there is a problem and to carry out activities ranging from peace-keeping and

(President Masire)

peacemaking in areas ravaged by civil wars to fighting natural disasters. It is also required to play a role in areas where democracy is being embraced.

The financing of both the United Nations activities under its regular budget and its peace-keeping operations has never been more crucial to the role and function of the Organization. For many years the Organization was paralysed by ideological confrontation, and it is unfortunate that it should now be hamstrung in the performance of its functions by financial emergency and crisis in an era when there is so much good will.

The issue is simple: the machinery of the United Nations cannot be expected to function effectively and efficiently when it has run out of financial steam. We can all bear testimony to the success of the United Nations system when there is a common desire and will to put the system to work. The assessed contributions have to be paid in full and on time, in accordance with the Charter. All arrears have to be paid as a demonstration of our commitment to the process of renewal and revitalization currently going on in the world and within the United Nations itself.

Botswana has followed with grave concern the tragic events in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the senseless killing and brutality visited on innocent men, women and children. It is indeed unfortunate that while many States in Eastern and Central Europe have experienced relatively peaceful transitions to democracy and political pluralism, the people of the former Yugoslavia, the founding champion and leader of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, should be bleeding so hopelessly. Yugoslavia was a critical factor for stability in Central Europe during the dark days of super-Power rivalry and military confrontation.

However, we cannot be distracted from present reality by the past. The international community has been rightfully outraged by acts of barbarism in a

(President Masire)

world increasingly characterized by civilized conduct in inter-State relations. The agreements reached at the London Conference, which enjoy the overwhelming approbation of the international community, must be implemented in full by all the parties involved in the brutal conflict. No effort should be spared in ensuring the restoration of lasting peace in the Balkans.

In South-East Asia, the brave and courageous men and women of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) continue to work quietly and tirelessly to bring about peace and stability in that country. It is hoped that all parties to the Agreement on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict will honour their obligations. The people of Cambodia have long awaited the day when they can return to their homes, walk in the streets and till the soil without fear of land mines.

The implementation of the peace agreement is a monumental task the likes of which this world body has never before undertaken. It is vitally important that the efforts of the United Nations succeed in timely and effective fashion. A situation in which the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) might be marooned in Cambodia, with the financial burden that would entail, must be avoided at all cost.

The Middle East peace talks which opened in Washington, D.C., on 24 August 1992 and which have now been suspended have given us cause for optimism. The atmosphere which has been created at the talks augurs well for serious negotiations for a comprehensive political settlement. We fully support the process under way and encourage the parties to the negotiations to ensure that this historic opportunity is not squandered.

(President Masire)

In Afghanistan, it is our sincere hope that the establishment of a transitional Government will silence the guns, which for 14 years wreaked death, misery and disaster on innocent civilians and on belligerents alike. The international community, in particular those Member States that have strong ties with the parties to the conflict, should bring maximum pressure to bear on the parties to refrain from resorting to the use of force in settling their differences.

In Somalia, a human tragedy of unspeakable dimensions is unfolding before our very eyes. According to a report of the Secretary-General contained in document S/24480 of 24 August 1992, famine threatens the lives of 4.5 million people. On a daily basis, many are dying a slow and painful death. It is regrettable that the response of the international community was painfully slow at the beginning of the tragedy. However, there were, and there continue to be, men and women whose devotion to humanitarian service and reverence for human life are unparalleled in their quality and dimension. The International Red Cross was there when no one else was. Its dedication to alleviating human suffering is truly extraordinary. The great son of a Lutheran pastor and 1952 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Dr. Albert Schweitzer, once said

> "There is no higher religion than human service. To work for the common good is the greatest creed."

The Red Cross deserves our gratitude and commendation.

In equal measure, we commend the efforts of the Secretary-General in securing the agreement and approbation of the parties to the conflict, in the face of immense difficulties, so that humanitarian assistance could reach the suffering people. We also welcome the decision of the Security Council to deploy an additional 3,000 observers in Somalia.

(President Masire)

In South Africa, at the time of their suspension three difficult months ago, the negotiations conducted within the framework of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) had undeniably achieved positive results. A substantial degree of consensus had been achieved within a relatively short time, considering that less than two years ago the apartheid edifice was still very much intact, barely shaken, and prospects for change in South Africa were as bleak as they could be. Now, we have seen what the three-month hiatus has wrought - more massacres as brutal at that at Boipatong, which caused the break-up of the negotiations in June. The recent one at Bisho in the Bantustan of Ciskei, however, seems to have had a sobering effect on the South African leaders. If anything at all, these massacres have shown that negotiations are the only hope for South Africa, and it is with a sigh of relief that we welcome the resumption of the negotiation process.

We welcome the keen interest the world community has shown in the South African crisis, as evidenced by the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 772 (1992) of 17 August 1992. The involvement of the international community in the process of change in South Africa is a very crucial element. It is our sincere hope that the United Nations observers mentioned in operative paragraph 4 of that Security Council resolution will be deployed in full and kept in place throughout the process of negotiation, or as long as it is deemed necessary and vital to keep them there.

Progress, if any, towards the resolution of the Western Sahara issue has been too slow, to say the least. The people of Western Sahara should be given the opportunity to exercise their right to national self-determination freely and fairly under international supervision. No obstacles should be placed in the way of the settlement plan.

(President Masire)

Recent developments in Angola and Mozambique mark the dawn of a new era in southern Africa. A situation of peace and stability is now gaining momentum. The signing of the General Peace Agreement by the President of Mozambique, Mr. Joaquim Chissano, and by the leader of RENAMO, Mr. Afonso Dhlakama, is a major development in the process of bringing peace to Mozambique. Botswana contributed in its small way to the process, and I had the honour to witness the signing of the Agreement in Rome on 4 October. I hope that the international community will extend political, diplomatic and moral support to Mozambique in order to ensure that the Agreement is translated into solid peace. Millions of Mozambicans face starvation and death because of the war and drought. The signing of the General Peace Agreement opens the door for the United Nations agencies and other international relief agencies, and the international community as a whole, to alleviate the suffering of the people of Mozambique, as well as to assist with the means to reconstruct their country.

For the first time since it acceded to independence in 1975, Angola held multiparty elections last week. The high turn-out for the elections indicates the readiness of the Angolan people to use the ballot rather than the bullet to resolve their differences. I hope that this high turn-out, coupled with free and fair elections, will bestow legitimacy on the new Government. What is of paramount importance, however, is the agreement made by the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (UNITA) to form a Government of national unity irrespective of whichever party wins the elections.

(President Masire)

This is the second time the United Nations has successfully supervised multiparty elections in southern Africa. The role of the United Nations in the peace process in Angola is therefore truly commendable.

There is an intricate relationship between peace and security and economic and social development. There can be no doubt that the problems of poverty, unemployment, huge foreign debt, budget deficits, lack of market access, high interest rates and the environment are not the problems of any one country or group of countries. No one country can solve them in isolation.

The macroeconomic management of the global economy should now be guided by the need to serve common interests. There should be an end to the perception of problems as being exclusively those of the North or of the South. A new approach is required, one that will identify the common problems of humanity and build on the consensus. We should put an end to mutual distrust, and move away from perceiving the economic concerns of countries as being mutually exclusive and permanently at loggerheads. This is not a zero-sum game.

The lessons of our recent past should guide us. The world was united in its opposition to aggression against Kuwait, and concerted efforts were made to mobilize resources in support of the countries of Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States; all of this showed an acceptance of the validity of the concepts of interdependence, partnership and the "global village."

In 1993 a World Conference on Human Rights will be held, followed by the 1994 Conference on Population and Development. And in 1995, as the United Nations celebrates its golden jubilee, the World Conference on Women will take place. This attests to the fact that these are shared human problems and

(President Masire)

therefore require our collective endeavours. There should be a move away from the temptation to accord the highest priority to human rights and democracy, to the detriment of other areas of primary concern. It serves no useful purpose to have priorities based solely on political considerations and what are perceived as strategic national interests.

Democracy is threatened when the legitimate expectations of the people are frustrated by economic deprivation. In this regard, we strongly support the proposal to convene a world summit for social development in 1995. It is our fervent hope that a consensus decision will be reached on this matter of critical importance to the world as a whole. The Summit should afford the international community the opportunity to address in an integrated manner the problems of poverty, illiteracy, disease, unemployment and poor living conditions.

The economic situation in Africa is still bleak. Africa continues to experience a crushing debt burden, falling commodity prices and painful structural adjustment programmes. The economies of many African countries have stagnated or retrogressed during the past year. The African economic crisis is a development challenge to mankind's collective conscience. Concerted efforts should be made to translate the United Nations New Agenda for Africa into concrete programmes and projects that can put our continent on the path to economic recovery and development. The Global Coalition for Africa (GCA), which I have the honour to co-chair on behalf of Africa, has made a significant contribution to the new consensus-building process since its inception in Maastricht in 1990. As a forum that brings together, at the highest level, policy makers from Africa and its international partners, the GCA has great potential in the search for solutions to Africa's most critical development issues.

(President Masire)

The GCA is a forum for equal engagement, for openness to policy decisions and for great seriousness. Our partnership with the North requires our most determined leadership. It is important that the GCA be Africa-driven, and it is in the interest of Africa to have a forum based on equal partnership.

As Chairman of the former Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), I am pleased to inform the Assembly that the member States recently signed in Windhoek, Namibia, a Treaty and Protocol establishing the Southern African Development Community (SADC). This historic development is part of the overall efforts of the countries of the subregion to enhance and intensify inter-regional cooperation.

SADCC had been in existence for 12 years as a loose arrangement between members. Those very fruitful years armed us with the courage, wisdom and experience to transform the loose arrangement that was the SADCC into the formal entity that is the SADC. The establishment of SADC is part and parcel of continental efforts to create an African economic community; it is without a doubt one of the community's building blocks.

(President Masire)

The establishment of SADC takes place against the backdrop of a serious drought crisis ravaging southern Africa. The response of the international community has been very positive, but the magnitude of the crisis is daunting. The scope and extent of its impact continue to unfold, necessitating a revised estimation of the resources needed to alleviate the plight of the most seriously affected populations. We appeal to the members of the international donor community who have not yet done so to convert their pledges into concrete contributions to avert a human tragedy.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development adopted a number of important decisions which are now before the General Assembly for follow-up and implementation. We attach the utmost importance to the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the Programme of Action outlined in Agenda 21. In this regard, we fully support the recommendation to the General Assembly on the establishment of a high-level commission on sustainable development. The Rio Summit was the beginning of a process which should now find concrete expression in the form of the commitment by Member States to honour their obligations. Of particular importance is the need for resources to implement Agenda 21.

Drought and desertification threaten the economic prospects of many developing countries. It is imperative that urgent measures be taken to find an integrated solution to the problem. We strongly believe that this can be done within the framework of negotiations on a convention on desertification. This is a matter of critical importance to many African States, and a positive decision will contribute substantially to the search for solutions to the economic malaise facing our continent.

(President Masire)

I should like to conclude by reaffirming Botswana's abiding faith in the United Nations and its Charter. We are ready to play our part in our common endeavour to strengthen the Organization to enable it to face the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Botswana for the statement he has just made.

Sir Ketumile Masire, President of the Republic of Botswana, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Sir Baddeley DEVESI (Solomon Islands): It is an honour and privilege for me to address this forty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly.

On behalf of the Government and people of Solomon Islands, I should like to express our sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the Assembly. I am confident that under your able leadership much will be achieved. I should also like to convey our sincere thanks and appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Samir Shihabi, for his outstanding leadership during the forty-sixth session.

Solomon Islands joins the United Nations community in congratulating and welcoming Mr. Boutros-Ghali, our new Secretary-General. Mr. Boutros-Ghali has indeed an important and challenging task ahead. I assure the Secretary-General of my Government's continued support and cooperation.

Much has happened since the last session of the General Assembly. Like the rest of the world community, Solomon Islands has viewed with interest the political developments in Eastern Europe since the latter half of 1991.

(Sir Baddeley Devesi,
Solomon Islands)

Self-determination has certainly taken its course. The former republics and States of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia have now gained their freedom to govern and pursue their own destinies. We observe with concern, however, that these changes have had some negative results.

It is worth noting that as a result of these changes a number of former republics and States have now become Members of this world body. In the same spirit as previous speakers, Solomon Islands would like to congratulate the newly independent States of Georgia, Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The presence of those countries with us in this world forum not only binds us closely, but brings home a message of unity, hope and peace.*

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* Mr. Mongbe (Benin), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Sir Baddeley Devesi, Solomon Islands)

Despite this message, Solomon Islands has learned with dismay about the recent killings of the civilian population and United Nations personnel in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We condemn this atrocious act. In this connection, Solomon Islands fully supports the various measures undertaken by the United Nations.

I now turn to the Middle East. Solomon Islands would like to register its recognition of the countries which have played a prominent role in the Middle East peace initiative. We appreciate the complexities of the conflict and acknowledge the initiatives taken by the parties involved to find a peaceful and lasting solution. Solomon Islands urges those with the necessary resources and the will to do so, to continue to play a mediating and supportive role in this process. In this context, Solomon Islands would like to raise the questions where and how the United Nations can best play its role in facilitating this effort. Given the emerging trend towards peace, Solomon Islands calls on the United Nations to be both sensitive and responsive in adopting resolutions. We look forward to more positive participation by the United Nations in this regard.

We should like to highlight issues that are of concern closer to home, the South Pacific. As the current Chairman of the South Pacific Forum, Solomon Islands has an obligation to convey to this body the aspirations and concerns of the region. At the twenty-third meeting of the South Pacific Forum in Solomon Islands in July this year, a number of issues of concern to the region were discussed. These included environmental, trade and economic, political and security issues.

The South Pacific region is unique because the marine environment is an integral part of our existence. Our people, perhaps more than others around

(Sir Baddeley Devesi, Solomon Islands)

the globe, depend on the sea, the land, the rivers and the forests for their immediate livelihood. But poor development planning and global environmental problems, such as climate change and the associated raising of the sea level, are becoming a threat to our resources and aspirations. For this reason, our region places environmental issues high on our agenda. Solomon Islands fully recognizes the important outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, including the Rio de Janeiro Declaration, Agenda 21, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the statement of principles on forests. We also endorse the concept of sustainable development, in which environmental protection constitutes an integral part of the development process. We are concerned, however, that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change has not sufficiently addresed the issue of global warming. We therefore earnestly urge the early commencement of the negotiations on protocols to implement and elaborate upon the Convention and we humbly request that this be treated as a matter of urgency.

Solomon Islands welcomes the decision of France to suspend its nuclear testing in our region. The suspension has led to an improvement in the relations between France and the countries in the region. It is hoped that France will endeavour to cease nuclear testing activities in the South Pacific for all time.

Solomon Islands believes that environmental education and the need to create public awareness of environmental and related issues should form the foundation for an implementation strategy for Agenda 21. My Government is convinced that without educating the youth of today, who will be the adults of tomorrow, we will merely be paying lip-service to these conventions,

(Sir Baddeley Devesi, Solomon Islands)

declarations and principles on environment. In other words, sustainable development of the environment and its protection demand relevant and cost-effective educational programmes aimed at both the formal and the non-formal sectors of our education systems.

As a step towards implementing Agenda 21, the primary and secondary curriculums in Solomon Islands are being reviewed with a view to introducing and improving the quality of environmental science education in schools. While we might have the initiative and the motivation to enhance environmental education programmes, the success of these undertakings is contingent on financial and technical assistance from the richer nations. It was heartening to hear, during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Brazil, that developed countries have committed themselves to providing "new and additional" financial assistance to enable developing countries to meet their obligations as stipulated under the conventions.

On economic and trade matters, Solomon Islands recognizes the adverse impact which the global macro-economic trends have on its economy, which is both open to, and susceptible to, external change. We realize that while the initiative to begin economic reforms must come from the country itself, regional and international co-operation in such efforts is also very vital.

Solomon Islands is at present pursuing a programme of structural adjustment. This programme emphasizes, first, active and effective private-sector participation; secondly, sustainable utilization of both human and natural resources; thirdly, privatization of government-owned companies; and fourthly, streamlining of the public service within the government. Being small, however, Solomon Islands cannot pursue such a programme effectively on its own. Success must depend on strategic regional development planning,

(Sir Baddeley Devesi, Solomon Islands)

proper coordination of development programmes, and the mobilization of resources to meet the needs. It also depends on the willingness and the commitment of those with financial resources to be involved. In view of these reforms, it is our sincere hope that the international financial institutions and donor countries will support our efforts to achieve our goals and objectives.

The vulnerability of small island countries to external and internal security threats is not a new issue in this forum. It has been a major subject of extensive discussion and debate over the past years. We are raising the issue again because, despite the end of the cold war, there has been little improvement in the situation in our region. Undesirable, criminal and atrocious activities and behaviour, both from within and outside the region, continue to threaten the sovereignty, security and economic integrity of the South Pacific countries.

At the twenty-third meeting of the South Pacific Forum in Honiara, Solomon Islands, in July 1992, the Forum agreed on a Declaration on Law Enforcement Cooperation. This Declaration identifies priority areas and establishes a framework within which security activities are to be pursued. But these undesirable activities cannot be addressed at the regional level alone.

(Sir Baddeley Devesi, Solomon Islands)

For the long-term peace and stability of the South Pacific region, or any other region for that matter, the involvement of and collaboration with relevant international agencies is vital.

On decolonization, the Solomon Islands notes with appreciation the positive measures pursued in New Caledonia by the French authorities in the implementation of the Matignon Accord. We encourage a continuing dialogue among all political parties in the territory. This is to ensure that self-determination consistent with the principles and practices of the United Nations Charter, in a framework within which all options, including that of independence, is achieved. We encourage regular contacts and interactions by the Kanaks and other New Caledonians with their South Pacific neighbours to give them courage and confidence as they prepare themselves to take on greater roles in their affairs.

As a small nation, Solomon Islands sees the United Nations system as an effective insurance framework for our peace and security, fully realizing, of course, that we have no military forces or military hardware. To this important extent, we hail with gratification the Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace", which highlights preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping, peacemaking and peace-building as a fresh challenge to our Organization in the future. We recognize these measures as they are defined in his report to be worthy of the attention of all Member States.

To conclude, may I on behalf of the Government and people of Solomon Islands thank the United Nations for its continued interest and assistance in the development of our country.

(Sir Baddeley Devesi, Solomon Islands)

I should like to place on record my Government's appreciation to the United Nations and the United Nations Missions in New York for their tributes and messages of condolence in honour of our former Permanent Representative to the United Nations, the late Mr. Francis Bugotu.

Mr. KALPAGE (Sri Lanka): The delegation of Sri Lanka congratulates Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria on his election as President of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly. We assure him of our full co-operation and support.

We wish to record our deep appreciation of the determined manner in which his predecessor, His Excellency Samir S. Shihabi, conducted the affairs of the forty-sixth session and of the keen interest he took in moving forward the process of revitalization of the General Assembly.

We welcome the new Member States and wish them every success in their legitimate national and international endeavours.

It is my special honour to convey to the General Assembly the greetings of the President of Sri Lanka, His Excellency Ranasinghe Premadasa, and his sincere good wishes for the efforts of the United Nations to ensure a just and peaceful world.

The cold war is over. Momentous developments continue to dominate the international scene. The consequences of these developments for a peaceful world have yet to fully unfold. New independent States have emerged. The transition to a stable and equitable order is full of uncertainties and challenges. Several peace initiatives to resolve conflicts offer hope. Nevertheless, there is simmering discontent within and among nations. Unrest and turmoil prevail in parts of the world.

(Mr. Kalpagé, Sri Lanka)

The violence in the territories of former Yugoslavia continues unabated. The tragedy in Somalia appals and shames the human conscience. The peace processes that began in Afghanistan and Cambodia have encountered setbacks. In South Africa a non-racial and democratic Government is yet to be established. The question of Palestine still remains on our agenda. We hope that the Middle East peace process will enable that troubled region to soon enjoy the peace for which its peoples yearn.

We thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali for his comprehensive report on the work of the Organization in these and other areas of activity during the year.

The Secretary-General's report on an "Agenda for Peace" is innovative and challenging. The proposals in his report must be considered with the care and seriousness they deserve given the instabilities that prevail and the uncertainties that lie ahead. The central focal-point for any action in this regard should be a revitalized and democratized United Nations.

The Secretary-General himself has observed that "the foundation stone to this work is and must remain the State". The fundamental sovereignty and integrity of the State are crucial to any common progress we seek to achieve. Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping and post-conflict peace building must be pursued in a manner that meets the legitimate aspirations of all Member States.

In keeping with the principles of universality and sovereign equality, the post-cold war peace process must encompass and involve all Member States. This is fundamental to the legal and moral authority of the United Nations.

(Mr. Kalpagé, Sri Lanka)

The General Assembly should continue to be the principal policy-making body of the Organization. We support all efforts to ensure more effective functioning of the General Assembly as a forum of multilateral diplomacy to achieve our common objectives.

The role of the United Nations in conflict prevention and conflict resolution should be pragmatic. It should contribute to the stability and long-term viability of the international system. The Secretary-General has reminded us that unlimited "fragmentation" of sovereign entities would make it more difficult to achieve peace, security and economic well-being for all. External intervention in any guise cannot be justified, except in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, particularly in cases where domestic solutions have not been entirely exhausted.

To ensure the efficacy of our collective efforts towards fulfilling the "Agenda for Peace", it is imperative that the United Nations assume a decisive role in formulating and putting into effect an "agenda for development". Lasting solutions can be found only through enlightened development-cooperation policies pursued in tandem with strategies for preventive diplomacy.

As the principal organ entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council now functions without the shackles that made it ineffective during the cold war. However, its present configuration continues to reflect the realities of the immediate-post-war power structure. The Security Council could be made more representative. It is important that its procedures be democratic and transparent. Its decisions should reflect consensus, arrived at after proper discussion, and respect for national sovereignty. There should be a better balance in the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council.

(Mr. Kalpagé, Sri Lanka)

The restructuring of the United Nations in its economic and social areas has already begun. There is a need for better coordination of global economic policies and for more effective policy-making and policy-implementation. Coordination and integration of operational activities of the specialized agencies and other bodies, functioning under the Economic and Social Council, and strengthening of the field presence of the United Nations have become vital. This will reduce duplication, inefficiency and a too-diffused focus of United Nations assistance. The ultimate aim of the reforms must be to enable the United Nations to be more effective in the promotion of development cooperation for social and economic progress. However, in our enthusiasm to reform the United Nations in the social and economic fields, we must maintain the principles of democracy, universality and respect for the sovereignty of States.

We wish to commend the Secretary-General for his bold initiatives in streamlining the work of the Secretariat. We hope that continuing efforts to maximize efficiency in the Secretariat will not diminish, but will enhance, the capacity of the United Nations to respond to the pressing socio-economic needs of the developing world.

We welcome the Secretary-General's efforts to reorganize the Secretariat and to utilize fully its human resources. These efforts should be matched by Member States' meeting their obligation under the Charter to make available the required financial resources. If the present financial crisis of the United Nations is to be resolved, these resources must be provided on time.

This year has witnessed a reaffirmation, by the nations of the Non-Aligned Movement, of the validity and relevance of non-alignment and of

(Mr. Kalpagé, Sri Lanka)

its basic approach in addressing international problems and development. The tenth Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Jakarta last month, emphasized the need to build a new and equitable international order based on political and economic democracy both within and between nations. The Jakarta Message conveys a clear consensus that the Non-Aligned Movement is not a captive of its nomenclature, which reflects the historical context in which the first Summit Conference took place.

In our commitment to promote and preserve the "dignity and worth of the human person" we believe that the best defence of human rights lies in democracy and openness in societies.

For over half a century Sri Lanka has had a proud record of uninterrupted universal adult franchise and respect for the electoral verdict. My country is a party to the Covenants on human rights. In Sri Lanka, steps are being taken to establish a human-rights commission to strengthen the fulfilment of our constitutional obligations relating to fundamental rights. We have an enduring commitment to both national and international accountability. Sri Lanka's policy of openness and of cooperation with national and international bodies in the field of human rights is derived from democratic traditions and institutions that are an integral part of Sri Lanka's value system.

Socio-economic aspects of human-rights problems have found their manifestations everywhere. This is evident from violent and undemocratic expressions of grievances in both developing and developed countries. We believe that a cooperative rather than a coercive approach would help international action to achieve the desired results in the field of human

(Mr. Kalpagé, Sri Lanka)

rights. Sri Lanka will participate constructively in the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993 to develop such a positive approach to the promotion of human rights world-wide.

International peace, security and development are indivisible. It is no longer possible to conceive of security essentially in military terms. The cold-war era, in which a highly militarized concept of security dominated East-West relations, is over. Today, socio-economic factors have become major determinants of global security. Multilateral disarmament and world peace and security are inextricably linked. This makes it necessary for the United Nations to play the central role in global disarmament. The United Nations should also be a catalyst in facilitating regional disarmament.

The monitoring of the illegal arms trade and its elimination should be a priority on the multilateral agenda on disarmament and conflict prevention. The illegal arms trade and the highly destructive evils of drug trafficking and terrorism are interlinked and mutually supportive. States should not permit their territories or their citizens to be used for the perpetration of acts of destabilization against other States through support for, or tolerance of, arms smuggling drug trafficking and terrorism. Multilateral action to address these real threats faced by democratic societies should constitute an indispensable element of the peace agenda of the United Nations.

(Mr. Kalpagé, Sri Lanka)

Sri Lanka strongly supported multilateral negotiations aimed at a total prohibition of the entire chemical weapons cycle. The successful conclusion of the convention on chemical weapons demonstrates the competence of the United Nations in multilateral negotiations. Sri Lanka was among those countries which signified an early interest in becoming an original signatory to the convention. We hope that States parties to this convention will promote international cooperation in the peaceful uses of chemicals in accordance with its letter and spirit.

Efforts to establish a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean continue. In view of the changing international situation, the United Nations Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean was of the view that the General Assembly might wish to consider alternative approaches. The Tenth Non-Aligned Summit Meeting in Jakarta took cognizance of this view and reiterated the determination to continue efforts to achieve the goals of the Declaration as considered at the meeting of littoral and hinterland States held in 1979. We hope that the new spirit of cooperation evident elsewhere in the world will embrace the Indian Ocean region as well.

My delegation is pleased with the conclusions reached at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro. We endorse the principles enunciated in the Rio Declaration, the programmes in Agenda 21, the commitment to a shared partnership by the provision of adequate new and additional funding and the transfer of the necessary technologies to developing countries. Sri Lanka has signed the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Con ention on Biological Diversity. We expect that the creation of a commission for sustainable development will without delay move forward the process of ensuring the sustainable development to which all nations and peoples committed themselves in Rio de Janeiro.

(Mr. Kalpagé, Sri Lanka)

The United Nations must take a visionary perspective in shaping the future of a world already transformed into a global village by modern technology. Yet, developing countries are still in a disadvantaged position owing to the non-availability of the necessary technologies. Among these, space technology is useful in the monitoring of the changing global environment and can assist developing countries in maximizing the use of their resources.

However, the high cost of space and other advanced technologies prevents developing countries from reaping their potential benefits. The United Nations and its specialized agencies must therefore work to ensure equitable access to these technologies so that the benefits can be shared by all. This will enable the development of a new regime of technological democracy.

The Convention on the Law of the Sea was signed 10 years ago. The Preparatory Commission continues to labour painstakingly to ensure that the resources of the seas and oceans - a common heritage of mankind - will be used for the benefit of all. We welcome the initiative of the Secretary-General to bring about universal participation in the Convention.

In different parts of the world regional organizations are being strengthened. Sri Lanka had the honour this year to be elected as Chairman of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC). The dynamic leadership of His Excellency Ranasinghe Premadasa, President of Sri Lanka, has significantly moved forward cooperation among the seven States members of SAARC on a number of initiatives.

A South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation, established this year, will enable fresh approaches to be taken on the basis of shared experiences in alleviating poverty in our populous region. Sri Lanka's own approach has been

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to provide opportunities and access to the poor to participate actively and productively as partners in national development, rather than being treated as passive recipients of charity.

A South Asian Preferential Trading Agreement (SAPTA) seeks to promote trade and commerce among SAARC countries. Efforts to expand cultural exchanges and to enhance people-to-people contact at various levels are under way. Regional recognition has been granted to the SAARC Chambers of Commerce and Industries.

The Second SAARC Ministerial Conference on Children in South Asia was held in Colombo in September. The Conference resolved to set up several goals and a time frame for their achievement. The specific goals deal with education, child-welfare and children's rights.

SAARC is also looking forward to promoting mutually beneficial cooperation with other regional and international organizations.

This has been a year of heightened activity in the SAARC region. The countries of our region are determined to maintain this momentum.

In this context I quote the words of our President, His Excellency Ranasinghe Premadasa:

> "A sense of innovation must animate SAARC cooperation. We cannot remain static. Fresh and imaginative approaches are needed. We have to face new challenges. New ways have to be found to deal with old problems that have lingered, defying solutions.
>
> "We in South Asia, have the ability to forge together a unity based on our ancient ties. Let us accept the challenge to build together a solidarity of mutual respect; one which will strengthen each individual

(Mr. Kalpagé, Sri Lanka)

nation in its independence. A solidarity which will weld our nations into a purposeful and dynamic unity. We will be then be able to face with confidence our common future".

These sentiments are a beacon for regional cooperation in South Asia.

In meeting the challenges that lie ahead it is abundantly clear that the United Nations offers the best hope for humankind. The strong and the weak, the rich and the poor, the industrialized and the developing are all represented here. It is only through our deliberations that the problems of our world come into global focus and solutions can be provided accordingly.

For the first time after the Charter of the United Nations was signed in San Francisco, 47 years ago, the peoples of the world through their representatives here assembled have it in their power to provide new directions for ensuring peace, security, prosperity and social justice in keeping with today's realities. The challenges are many; equally, the opportunities are great. We owe it to the millions who crave equity and justice and a better life in larger freedom that we shoulder our responsibilities with courage and perseverance. We cannot afford to falter or fail. We must succeed.

Mr. KING (Barbados): It is a pleasure for me to congratulate Mr. Ganev on his unanimous election to the presidency of the Assembly at its forty-seventh session. I am confident that our deliberations will benefit from his wise leadership.

I also commend his predecessor, Mr. Samir Shihabi, for the outstanding stewardship he provided during the course of the last year, and I take this opportunity too to extend my personal welcome and good wishes to our new Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

I am pleased to greet the many new Members that have joined the United Nations family since the beginning of the last session and to offer them the full cooperation of the delegation of Barbados as we work together to shape the international order for the twenty-first century.

The old world order has disintegrated at an astonishing pace. Assumptions and doctrines based on the cold-war balance of power have lost their relevance. At the same time, ambitious expectations have been created for the emergence of a new world order based on peaceful coexistence, economic equity and social justice.

The transition, however, has proved more traumatic and destabilizing than the propitious circumstances would have suggested. The energies for revolutionary change need to be positively directed so that prospects for international peace are not threatened by the resurgence of ancient ethnic and tribal conflicts and the violent clash of nationalistic rivalries. Regrettably, there are alarming manifestations of that new threat in Yugoslavia and Somalia.

Barbados is appalled at the savagery with which the protagonists of ethnic strife in what was once Yugoslavia are pursuing their misguided notions of nationalism and sovereignty. Such barbarism, including the horrendous

(Mr. King, Barbados)

practice of "ethnic cleansing", has no place in our modern world. Its perpetrators must be made to understand the outrage of the international community at their actions. My country fully supports the regime of sanctions imposed by the Security Council and the dedicated efforts of the European Community and the United Nations to create the conditions for a peaceful settlement and to bring relief to the hundreds of thousands of innocent civilian victims.

Equally disturbing is the desperate situation in Somalia, which, regrettably, has only recently attracted the international attention it deserves, and then only at the sharp prodding of the Secretary-General. Barbados supports regional and international efforts towards the convening of a conference on national reconciliation and unity in Somalia and towards creating secure conditions for humanitarian action.

My country commends the Secretary General's report "An Agenda for Peace" to the Assembly for its careful study. A number of its recommendations are consistent with the views contained in my statement to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, namely, the need to strengthen the capability of the Secretary-General for preventive diplomacy; the need to put into place the permanent enforcement tools required under Article 43 of the Charter to deter, and in the last resort, counter aggression; and the need to make full use of the appropriate regional and subregional security arrangements under Chapter VIII of the Charter. We also support his call for greater recourse to the International Court of Justice for the peaceful adjudication of disputes. My delegation supports the view of the Secretary-General that there is an urgent necessity to put peace-keeping operations on a sound financial footing. His recommendations and other positive suggestions should be given priority study.

(Mr. King, Barbados)

A number of small countries have been unable to play a part in traditional United Nations peace-keeping simply because they have lacked the logistical military capability for so doing. The expanded dimensions of peace-keeping, however, provide the possibility for participation by small States in other fields in which they have expertise, such as electoral supervision, human-rights monitoring and the supply of police and civilian personnel. Such participation should be encouraged and facilitated by the Organization. In this regard, my delegation has noted with interest the Norwegian proposal for the establishment of a special United Nations institute for education and training in peace-keeping and related activities as a means to respond to these new dimensions.

While we cannot fail to recognize the indispensable nature of United Nations peace-keeping operations, my country is nevertheless concerned at the dramatic escalation in their costs and would wish to see more stringent controls and oversight in place to ensure efficient use of the billions of dollars now involved.

An agenda for peace requires a supportive economic environment. A new world order must be developed around the central priority of closing the gap between North and South. This requires courageous leadership on the part of the North to create the opportunities for sustainable economic and social development in the South through genuine trade liberalization, meaningful debt-relief strategies and positive resource transfers. It also requires responsible management; sound, people-oriented development planning; and the creation of the appropriate environment for development on the part of the South.

The United Nations is a critical forum for the resuscitation of the international economic dialogue. Barbados welcomes the serious debate now

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taking place on reforming and strengthening the economic and social mandate of the United Nations. Any such reform must be consistent with the provisions of the Charter and seek to ensure universality and accessibility. Care must be taken not to exclude the small and powerless from the process. Regrettably, however, the emphasis currently given to developmental issues within the administrative structure of the Organization does not reflect the priority accorded to those issues by the majority of Member States. My delegation accepts that the maintenance of international peace and security is a major responsibility of the United Nations. We strongly support the view that peace and economic and social well-being are indivisible and that issues relating to development must be given emphasis equal to that given to issues relating to peace.

It is important that the United Nations be a forum for constructive consensus-building, where all points of view - no matter the size of their proponents or how much influence they wield - are given equal attention and respect. A new world order cannot evolve except in an atmosphere of free and open dialogue, consultation and transparency in decision-making.

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There is considerable merit in the argument that the Security Council in the post-cold-war era should be updated to reflect the new international political and economic realities, as well as the balance and diversity necessary for its decisions, if it is to command universal acceptance and respect.

A very topical issue in this forum in recent times has been the dialogue on what the Secretary-General has termed "the democratization of international relations and the participation of all States in developing new norms of international life". There have been calls for the redefinition of the concept of State sovereignty in international law, and many States have accepted as a matter of policy the notion of the right to intervene on humanitarian grounds and for the protection of human rights, and have advocated the universal application of such a principle.

My country has always been outspoken on the universal need to protect and strengthen the principles of democracy and respect for fundamental human rights. We have consistently condemned abuses, wherever and whenever they have occurred, and long before the resurgence of democratic values in our region and elsewhere made it popular or safe to do so. Our actions have always been motivated strictly by principle and objectivity, and not by ideological considerations that have served in the past to politicize the debate.

The disappearance of ideological polarization gives the international community an unprecedented opportunity to influence the dialogue on this vital issue in a balanced and constructive way. There is need to ensure respect for fundamental human rights; but there is equal need to take care to promote impartial standards for measuring adherence to, and for guarding scrupulously against manipulation of, the debate to suit the narrow foreign policy

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interests of particular States. What is needed in the ensuing dialogue is the sensitive and sensible application of universally agreed standards, not the imposition of new forms of conditionality devoid of all historical or cultural context.

The World Conference on Human Rights, scheduled to be held in Vienna in June 1993, will present a unique opportunity not only to review the progress made in human rights since 1948, but also to formulate recommendations aimed at charting the course of human rights well into the twenty-first century.

The tragic situation of the people of Haiti remains a major preoccupation of the Government and people of Barbados and of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) as a whole. We have made clear our outright condemnation of the usurpation of the authority of the legitimate government of President Aristide, and have collaborated with our regional partners in CARICOM and the Organization of American States (OAS) in the effort to restore that government. We have supported the OAS-imposed embargo and the Protocol of Washington. It is clear, however, that no lasting solution can be found, except in a context that neutralizes the power of a brutal and lawless military, which continues with impunity its flagrant abuses of the human rights of the Haitian people. The international community has a special obligation towards the people of Haiti, whose electoral process was monitored and authenticated at every step with direct United Nations involvement. If such a process can be overturned with impunity, what message are we sending to the world of would-be dictators, and what assurance are we providing for the fledgling democracies in our region? It is imperative that the United Nations take action to internationalize the embargo and to contribute, in whatever ways are considered appropriate and useful, to OAS efforts towards the restoration of the Aristide government.

(Mr. King, Barbados)

Barbados is greatly encouraged by the decision reached by the De Klerk Government and by Mr. Mandela on 26 September 1992 to resume negotiations with a view to establishing an interim government and a constituent assembly in South Africa. The release of 150 political prisoners and the promise by the South African Government to release the remaining political prisoners by 15 November 1992 represent a significant development that satisfies an important condition of the United Nations Declaration on southern Africa.

Barbados deplores the violence that has been a major obstacle to reform in South Africa, and holds the De Klerk Government fully responsible for failing to curb it. The role of the United Nations remains critical to reform efforts in South Africa. We therefore welcome the deployment of 50 United Nations observers in South Africa to assist with the implementation of the National Peace Accord, and hope that the size of this contingent will be increased, if necessary. We urge all the parties to collaborate in maintaining an environment free of violence and to participate in peaceful negotiations aimed at achieving a non-racial, democratic South Africa.

We are also encouraged by the current dialogue in the Middle East. We hope that all parties will make every effort to achieve a just and lasting peace.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), which took place in Rio de Janeiro in June this year, was perhaps the most ambitious and far-reaching United Nations-sponsored gathering ever held. It served a vital purpose in focusing world attention on the interrelationship between human development and the environment, and in fostering global awareness of the importance of the concept of sustainable development to the future survival of our planet and all its inhabitants.

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Barbados cannot pretend to be fully satisfied with the results of the Rio Conference. It was, however, an important beginning in the process towards an international blueprint for sustainable development in the twenty-first century. The creation of a high-level sustainable development commission is an important element in providing serious follow-up to the decisions of Agenda 21. Care must be taken to ensure the widest possible access to, and participation in, the work of the Commission by the full membership of the United Nations. Barbados has signed the Conventions on Climate Change and on Biological Diversity, and is taking the necessary steps at the domestic level to ensure their early ratification. We reiterate, however, that there is an urgent need to begin work on a protocol to the Framework Convention on Climate Change that specifically addresses stabilization and reduction of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

My country is heartened that one of the significant achievements at UNCED was the recognition given to the special environmental and development needs of small island developing States, leading to the inclusion in Agenda 21 of a specific plan of action for the sustainable development of small island developing States. In this regard, my delegation wishes to place on record its deep appreciation of the sterling efforts of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), whose contribution to the success of the Conference cannot be overstated. As part of the plan to identify and address the special needs of this category of States, a global conference will be convened in 1993. Barbados is honoured to reiterate its offer to host that Conference.

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The vulnerability of our environment and the fragility of our marine ecosystems require constant vigilance to guard against deliberate or accidental degradation. In this connection, we echo the concerns of the Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis about the possible passage through our region of plutonium or other hazardous material.

The opportunities provided for shaping a truly harmonious new world order are enormous. The danger of failure is, however, equally great, unless the redefinition of our future takes place with equal participation by all the members of the global family. Never before has the power of the few over the destinies of the many been so apparent, and never before has it been so vital to the survival of the majority of small and powerless States that make up the United Nations for that power to be used responsibly.

Mr. TURNQUEST (Bahamas): I congratulate Mr. Ganev on his unanimous election to the presidency of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly. We are certain that his diplomatic skills and considerable experience will lead us to historic conclusions.

I also wish to pay tribute to his predecessor, Mr. Samir S. Shihabi, Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia, for the excellent manner in which he presided over the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

In his short time in office our Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, has inspired our confidence that he has the qualities essential to perform the duties of chief executive of the United Nations. I take this opportunity to congratulate him on his appointment to this high office last year. I assure him of the continued cooperation of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas during this session of the General Assembly, as he leads a United Nations challenged to reaffirm its fundamental purposes and

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principles, and obliged to redefine its role and function in this world of unprecedented change.

The Bahamas warmly welcomes those States that have joined the United Nations since our last session of the General Assembly.

In just six days - on 12 October - we who live in the Western Hemisphere will mark the five-hundredth anniversary of the encounter between the old world and the new, which comes at a most pivotal time in modern history. It all began on one of the many islands of the Bahamas, now called San Salvador, and we are pleased to mark this historic occasion.

On a number of occasions during that 500-year interval these worlds referred to as East and West have encountered each other in angry and even bloody disagreement, and sometimes those disagreements have resulted in a cold separation of peoples, countries and cultures.

The quincentennial presents an opportunity and an invitation to East and West to re-enact that initial encounter in a way that is relative and meaningful to the nations and the cultures of the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries for mutual benefit and for global preservation.

The present-day inhabitants of the Bahamas, like those of 1492, are a peace-loving and hospitable people. Small though we are in population, we firmly believe in the significance of the role we can play in achieving the peaceful coexistence of nations and environmental preservation. In that belief, I extend a warm and cordial invitation to all the nations represented here to come and see and experience the peace and tranquillity of the country where that encounter took place 500 years ago.

Today I address the Assembly on behalf of the Government and the people of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas to reaffirm our commitment to the

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purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to pledge my Government's cooperation as we seek to ensure that our Organization maintains its objectives and enhances its effectiveness in international affairs.

The winds of political change, stirred by the innate desire of the electorate for democratic representation and the concomitant responsibility of those elected, did not bypass the Bahamas. The Bahamian people once again demonstrated their long tradition of, and unswerving commitment to, the democratic process when in the most dramatic yet tranquil manner, in the words of Aldous Huxley, a "brave new world" was ushered into the lives of Bahamians, and a new administration, the Government of the Free National Movement (FNM), was democratically elected only seven weeks ago, on 19 August. That signal event heralded a new era in Bahamian history. It is a reinvigorated Bahamas that is now poised to take its place in this emerging new political arena.

Our vision is of a world free of tension, thus enabling us to deliver to our people a new kind of freedom and social and economic justice.

This year natural disasters have occurred worldwide, exacting high tolls on human life and the destruction of property and natural resources.

Just recently the Bahamas endured the ravages of Hurricane Andrew, which caused severe damage - $250 million-worth - to several islands of the Bahamas, resulting in a tragic loss of life and leaving more than 1,200 persons homeless.

I wish on behalf of my Government to thank all those countries and international organizations, as well as many, many individual friends, for coming to the aid of the Bahamas as we begin the task of reconstruction. At the same time, we extend our sympathy to the Governments and people of the

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United States of America, China, Nicaragua and Pakistan for the devastation and loss of life inflicted upon their countries by recent natural disasters.

All our countries face potential natural hazards. But natural hazards, no matter how great, need not result in natural disasters. We often spend too much time and money recovering from disasters and too little on prevention.

Widespread upheavals and conflicts, within States and between States, have been responsible for the mass movement of persons from one country to the other. This phenomenon not only threatens the security and stability of the affected countries, but also creates competing demands for attention and vital resources. This Organization must not be perceived as selective in mediating problems of a political nature, nor as elevating the suffering of one group of people over that of another.

In our region, the critical situation in Haiti demands urgent international attention.

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Almost two years ago, the people of Haiti spoke for democracy. But the unconstitutional seizure of power by the military has subverted the popular will. The great expectations which the world had for Haiti under a democratically elected Government were dashed. Political unrest, economic deprivation and poverty have caused a mass exodus of its people, who are fleeing their homeland in unprecedented numbers and thereby placing an unacceptably high burden on neighbouring countries, particularly the Bahamas. I now make a plea for the people of Haiti. We call on the international community to come to the aid of Haiti.

It must be appreciated that no matter how grave our disillusionments over the plight of the Haitian people, no matter how solicitous our efforts to understand and to help, and no matter how expansive our Christian charity in this whole unfortunate affair, the Bahamas has a priority responsibility for the welfare of the Bahamian people.

In the comprehensive Manifesto on which the Governing Party in the Bahamas was swept into power in August this year, we reaffirmed our commitment to that priority, and it is necessary that our sister nations in this Organization fully understand the Bahamas' position on the matter.

For almost three decades the Bahamas has been subjected to this serious problem of illegal Haitian immigration. The presence of large numbers of illegal immigrants in the Bahamas has created unexpected demands on the country's economic, health and welfare agencies. This situation cannot continue, and the Bahamas can no longer afford to be penalized by the situation simply because of our geographical position.

The Bahamas supports the efforts of the Organization of American States (OAS) to negotiate a settlement to the situation in Haiti. Fully appreciative

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of the practical limits to action by the OAS, the Bahamas advocates and supports United Nations efforts aimed at strengthening OAS initiatives and finding a solution to this problem.

The Bahamas wishes to place on record its deep appreciation for the continuing assistance which the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has rendered to us in the difficulties caused us by this problem. We implore all concerned to continue to pursue all peaceful means to reach a comprehensive settlement of the Haitian situation.

I should also like to decry the problems of drug abuse, drug trafficking and the illicit production of drugs, which continue to haunt the international community with their catastrophic effects on our individual societies.

The creation o. he United Nations International Drug Control Programme has been our most recent collective step to strengthen, improve and rationalize the legal and institutional framework for control of the production, trafficking and abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. My Government wishes to affirm its support for the Programme and its efforts in providing valuable assistance to countries fighting this menace.

However, a most significant element in the fight against the drug trade is the requisite cooperation between States. My Government pledges to continue its collaboration with our neighbours to fight against the drug menace. In this regard, we wish to thank the Governments of the United States of America and Canada for the assistance they have rendered to the Bahamas.

The world breathed a sigh of relief earlier this year when it appeared that talks between the Government of South Africa and the African National Congress gave promise of establishing a political solution to the problems of South Africa. The Bahamas deeply regrets that the process of dialogue has

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been interrupted. We condemn the massacre at Boipatong and other massacres of innocent civilians, as we equally condemn the efforts by the South African Government to delay the realization of majority rule in South Africa.

The United Nations has been a critical force in opposing the abhorrent system of apartheid in South Africa and in moving that country towards a non-racial, unitary and democratic society. The role of the United Nations is even more critical since the lifting of sanctions by many influential States. The United Nations must not fail the people of South Africa at this critical moment. My country strongly supports the phased lifting of sanctions agreed by States members of the Commonwealth, and it firmly supports the effort that the United Nations is making to encourage the resumption of negotiations towards a new constitution for South Africa and ending the violence which threatens a total disruption of these negotiations.

The Earth Summit held in Rio in June of this year was a historic beginning. The fact that more than 118 world leaders attended is a measure of the seriousness with which the global community is viewing the question of the environment.

It is perhaps a trite truism to observe that the survival of the human family depends to a great extent on how this generation protects the natural environment. The positive results achieved by the Summit were due in large measure to the cooperation fostered by the United Nations. Real success, however, will be judged by the abilities of countries to carry out programmes at the national level. This can come about only when national capacities are strengthened and additional resources are available. We must therefore continue to maintain the vision and basic principles of multilateral cooperation.

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The Bahamas therefore welcomes the decision to establish a United Nations commission on sustainable development to monitor the follow-up action after Rio. The Bahamas, an archipelagic State of pristine aquamarine water, with a vibrant tourist industry, is committed to the protection of its own natural environment as well as the promotion of the global environment. My Government sees eco-tourism as a powerful instrument for sustainable development of the Bahamas, and we are fully committed to protection of the environment. The Bahamas therefore gives its assurance that it will scrupulously abide by the conventions signed at Rio, and its commitment to sustainable development remains absolute.

The World Economic Survey of 1992 indicates that world output has declined for the first time since the Second World War. World trade has experienced slow growth. Countries continue to wrestle with economic recession and the decline in world financial markets. Failure to complete the Uruguay Round of negotiations will undoubtedly lead to increased protectionism. These are areas of concern to us all, as are the uncertainties prevailing in world markets with regard to the future course of interest rates. These introduce many constraints on investment capital flows and consequently on the growth of developing countries in particular.

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In spite of all these problems and uncertainties, the performance of the world economy can be improved through the enhancement of international cooperation and policy coordination, which must now be a principal objective of the United Nations.

The United Nations has become the centre of a diplomatic revolution, one that mirrors the revitalization of national political institutions in many countries. Fundamental changes not only promise greater personal freedom and more dynamic societies, but frequently provide new challenges which create uncertainty in international relations. The United Nations will have to adopt a new strategy for addressing these challenges.

Today, we live in a world of much lowered ideological tension, a world in which representative democracy is of fundamental importance. Indeed, the renewal in many parts of the world of the democratic process implies greater respect for human rights. In that regard, the United Nations must play a catalytic role in ensuring that human rights are assured.

We have also come better to understand the relationship between respect for human rights and our search for economic and social development, and we must measure that development by actual improvements in human lives and not exclusively in monetary terms.

We are hopeful that the greatly changed international environment and the renewal of interest worldwide in human rights will contribute to the success of the World Conference on Human Rights scheduled for 1993. In this regard my Government has undertaken to give early consideration to all of the human rights conventions to which the Bahamas is not yet a party, including the Covenants relating to economic, social and political rights.

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The pace of change in international politics is straining mankind's capabilities of assimilation and assessment. In Western Europe the outlines of supernationalism have become visible. In Central Europe the echoes of history are heralded again after more than 40 years of silence. And in Eastern Europe communism is in full-scale retreat under the implacable pressure of the recognition of its limitations and of rising expectations. In Asia countries that could scarcely feed themselves a generation ago have become tigers of economic competition. Meantime, the spectre of famine remains over the Horn of Africa, demonstrating that not all change is positive. Almost everywhere pluralistic democratic values are surfacing and tending to dominate.

In a world of tinder, fire-breaks are needed. The United Nations peace-keeping operations can be considered just such fire-breaks. The support of the international community, both political and material, remains an essential characteristic of peace-keeping operations, regardless of their size. Political support by Governments can mean the difference between a party's compliance with the terms of an agreement and serious infractions that jeopardize lives and progress towards peace.

The price of United Nations peace-keeping is, by monetary standards, a bargain. But the United Nations is more than just good value. The contributions of the membership are certainly a more cost-effective and humane solution to international disputes than the conflict and human suffering that occur when States feel that they are unable, or are unwilling, to use the machinery offered by the United Nations and resort to war.

We welcome the recent pronouncements of the Presidents of the United States of America and of the Russian Federation of 17 June 1992 to

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reduce their nuclear arsenals below the numbers agreed to last summer during the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty Talks (START) and their joint statement on chemical weapons in which they reiterated their commitment to the global elimination of such weapons. The recently concluded negotiations on a convention banning chemical weapons is a further important step forward in curtailing the use of weapons of mass destruction. Further progress in this area will be determined by the political will of Member States, their commitment to their obligations under existing disarmament agreements, and the more recent agreements, such as the United Nations universal and non-discriminatory Register of Conventional Arms, which became operational on 1 January 1992. The Bahamas remains totally committed to general and complete disarmament.

The bedrock for action by the United Nations lies in States adhering to, and consistently applying, the principles of the Charter. It costs money to put principles into practice. Expanded responsibilities translate into greater costs, which must be borne by the States Members of the Organization.

In the coming decade it is vital to use in the most effective and efficient manner this Organization, which has demonstrated the importance of its promotional and catalytic role, particularly in bringing to the surface issues which are likely to assume importance in coming years.

The creation of a stable and more favourable international environment is fundamental to the strengthening of multilateral policy coordination within an enhanced framework, especially if we are to realize our new vision for an improved new world order. This requires the collective resolve of the giant nations as well as of tiny nations, such as the Bahamas, to work together to

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remove constraints and to allow for optimum growth and development. The new world order can be lasting only if all constituent elements grow in harmony. A multilateral, concerted and comprehensive approach is vital for the implementation of effective and lasting solutions to global problems.

As I noted at the outset, this year's commemoration of the quincentennial in the Bahamas and in the western hemisphere offers a unique opportunity to make real and meaningful and mutually beneficial that original encounter of the old and new worlds. There are those who condemn that encounter but Columbus did come and as a result a medley of old and new cultures and civilizations emerged.

It was fitting that with the coming into being of the United Nations in San Francisco in 1945 the Preamble to our Charter reaffirmed our determination to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and our faith in fundamental human rights, and established conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law should be maintained.

In those 47 years, many swords have been beaten into plowshares, and many spears into pruning hooks. It is now left for us to make abidingly true the end of that refrain, that nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall we learn war any more.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.